

Group seeks to retire Chief in dignified, solemn manner

■ Billboards part of strategy for ActNow

By J. PHILIP BLOOMER
News-Gazette Staff Writer

URBANA—There are rabid and radical Chief opponents. There are rabid and radical Chief supporters.

And somewhere in the middle, there is ActNow.

This newly formed group is made up of professors and academic staff from the north to the south of campus, from engineering to agriculture.

Their mission, they say, is a restorative one—to retire Chief Illiniwek with respect and dignity.

Billboards with that message will be going up Friday morning in nine different locations, including locations where Champaign attorney John Gadau had his billboards calling for the ouster of Chancellor Nancy Cantor over the Chief.

"Noble as it may have been at some point, it has become a negative influence on our ability to do the productive work that is our mission," William Sullivan said. Sullivan is the director of The Environmental Council, an arm of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. A UI graduate, he has been a season-ticket holder for football and basketball, and earlier, was someone who stood and revered the Chief at halftimes.

He likely won't be on the Quad today participating in a rally, candlelight vigils, prayers and songs as anti-Chief coalitions and American Indian groups from across the Midwest gather to lobby against the Chief on the eve of Thursday's UI Board of Trustees meeting.

ActNow has a rather different

agenda, Sullivan said. Rather than direct confrontation and demands for the Chief's abolishment, they are seeking a solemn retirement of a symbol that has become divisive and distracting to the UI's goals.

The pending search for a new president and chancellor only adds urgency to the decision, they say.

"There is a sense of vulnerability now," Sullivan said. "We need and deserve the best, the smartest, most creative, hard-working people we can get. If they do fit that criteria, they'll be attractive to other institutions as well. I say let's remove the Chief from the equation, have the board step up and act in the best interest of the university, retire the Chief in a respectful way that values that tradition, and move on."

Sullivan said the ActNow group grew by word-of-mouth and small gatherings in people's houses. In recent weeks, the group has raised several thousand dollars and will be using that for billboards, ads in newspapers and signature drives.

Their efforts underscore two votes by the Urbana faculty Senate that overwhelmingly favor the Chief's retirement.

The heat of the debate continues to intensify, even as the trustees have scheduled no action on the Chief at their Urbana meeting Thursday. Trustee Frances Carroll earlier said she was withdrawing her intended resolution on the Chief's retirement because there was no consensus on the matter.

Last month, the local Honor the Chief organization held a meeting at the Round Barn Banquet Center, attended by at least two trustees, to engender support for their cause.

Brian Silverman, an Honor the Chief supporter and one-

time trustee candidate, said the argument that the Chief has become divisive ignores the history of the controversy.

"It's setting up a straw man to turn around and knock down," he said. "It's the anti-Chief people who made it divisive in the first place."

"This is laughable," Silverman said. "You make enough noise about something, the something becomes divisive so it appears reasonable to make it go away."

ActNow argues that this is an issue that has spilled far beyond local borders and is affecting the UI's reputation nationally, as well as its scholarship. Sullivan said he was at a conference in Atlanta last week where he ran into three anthropologists who told him their societies would no longer hold conference meetings not only in Champaign-Urbana, but in the state, until the Chief is retired.

"It's gone too far. I'll tell you what clinched it for me was a picture in The News-Gazette last November of the trustee meeting. There were these solemn Native Americans sitting in a row, all brown faces, and behind them these students in orange Chief T-shirts doing the tomahawk chop or something."

"It seemed so aggressive, disruptive and so unnecessary. I felt then that it's time for a change."

Continued

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*It's not a matter of if
but when...*

actnow

Retire the Chief
with respect—NOW

Orange and blue billboards calling for the Chief's retirement begin going up in nine Champaign-Urbana locations on Friday. The billboards were bought by the newly formed ActNow organization, an independent group of faculty and staff at the University of Illinois.

ActNow

UI president search committee to be named at board meeting

URBANA — Nineteen people will serve on the committee charged with initiating the search for a new University of Illinois president to replace James Stukel.

Eighteen of those will be formally named Thursday when the UI Board of Trustees meets in Urbana. A 19th will be added later after the board acts to amend the makeup of the committee. Board Secretary Michelle Thompson said a 19th person will be named by the chair of the committee to represent the public at large.

Faculty members scheduled to serve from Urbana are Karen Alston of women's studies, geneticist Michael Grossman and electrical engineer Michael

Loui

From Springfield are Nancy Ford of the legal studies department and anthropologist James Stuart. From Chicago are Mitra Dutta of electrical engineering, Henri Gillet of mathematics and Elliot Kaufman of biochemistry.

Student members are Aaron Thomas, an MBA student from Urbana; Carly Hawkins, a junior in political science from Springfield; and Antonio Vasquez, a doctorate candidate in economics from Chicago.

The academic professional staff representative is Vera Mainz of the School of Chemical Sciences, Urbana.

The civil service representative is Dan Sarhage, a plant engineer from Chicago.

The administrative officer representative is Avijit Ghosh, professor and dean of the College of Business, Urbana. Ghosh will also chair the committee.

UI Alumni Association and Foundation representatives are Dave Downey, president of The Downey Group of Champaign and former trustee; Edward McMillan, CEO of McMillan LLC of Edwardsville; and Roger Plummer, president of Plummer & Associates Consulting of Chicago and a former trustee.

Alumnus at large to be appointed is Cary McMillan, CEO of Sara Lee Corp.'s worldwide branded apparel and the vice chair of the committee.

—J. PHILIP BLOOMER

New spark for UI fleet

■ No-emission electric cars to cruise campus

By PAUL WOOD
News-Gazette Staff Writer

CHAMPAIGN — The GEM car looks like the product of an unholy marriage between a Mini Cooper and a PT Cruiser.

The University of Illinois has purchased eight of the emission-free vehicles, the first four of which were shown off Tuesday to the roar of — scratch that, the electric engine makes almost no noise.

In fact, when you step into this golf-cart-on-steroids and turn the key, there's no noise at all. Only when you flip the switch from neutral into forward do you hear the gentle rumble of a 5-horsepower engine.

With an engine not so much bigger than a lawn mower's, the UI's GEMs can comfortably cruise at 25 mph, which, after all, is the speed limit on campus. Inspectors, and construction workers will be among the first to use the new vehicles.

Mike Hari, the university's Fleet Operations coordinator, has been pushing for three years to replace some of the UI's petroleum-guzzling vehicles with a model that gives off no pollution at all.

"Instead of gas, these run on coal," he said Tuesday, nodding northward at the university's Abbott Power Plant, which turns sulfurous Illinois coal into electricity for the campus.

Power comes out of any wall outlet. The Global Elec-

tric Motorcar is made in Fargo, N.D., by a company recently bought out by Daimler-Chrysler, so Hari expects parts to be available for a long time to come.

"A couple of our mechanics are in North Dakota right now getting trained," Hari said.

Tourists may recognize the GEM from rentals in Key West and Hawaii. The vehicle also seems to be catching on at universities.

At the State University of New York College at Delhi, spokeswoman Kim MacLeod said "We do love them. They've replaced many cars in our aging fleet, at a great savings. We simply didn't have the money to buy new cars."

SUNY Delhi got six vehicles through a state grant. The Urbana campus got a reduced price on its first eight GEMs — about \$10,000, \$3,000 cheaper than regular buyers pay — is negotiating a rebate from the state of Illinois, and has already received a grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Clean Fleet program.

Consumers also get a federal tax deduction.

MacLeod said the GEMs are clean and convenient.

"You just plug them into the wall. We thought they'd be limited to a few areas, but they are proving to be very versatile. One of our food service managers uses one — she drives hers right into the dining area."

SUNY Delhi's GEMs have canvas doors. The UI's models are more deluxe, with serious doors and heaters. Hari said

what works in Key West — some GEMs have no doors at all — isn't up to Champaign weather.

There is safety equipment on the vehicle and it meets state standards for a vehicle traveling no faster than 35 mph. A full charge takes six hours in a 110-volt outlet, Hari said.

You can reach Paul Wood at (217) 351-5203 or via e-mail at pwood@news-gazette.com.

UIC edges UWM to lock up NCAA tournament bid

UIC 65, WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE 62

BY JOE GODDARD
Staff Reporter

MILWAUKEE — Jimmy Collins put the ball in Cedrick Banks' court for Illinois-Chicago on Tuesday night in the Horizon League championship game against Wisconsin-Milwaukee at U.S. Cellular Arena.

When Banks has the ball, the coach said, he's to shoot it.

"He's the horse we like to ride," Collins said of Banks, who was averaging 18.7 points entering the game. "The other guys know what to do," Banks said. "When Martell Bailey brings the ball up, his job is to get it into Cedrick's hands. When Armond Williams gets a rebound, his job is to get the ball to Cedrick. When Joe Scott clears a rebound, he has to get it to Cedrick, too."

It all worked out for the Flames, who locked up an NCAA tournament bid with a thrilling 65-62 victory over

UWM.

With the score tied at 62 and 34 seconds remaining, Elliott Poole's basket gave UIC the lead. On the ensuing possession, UIC broke up a pass in the lane with less than 10 seconds left. A free throw made it 65-62, and UWM's desperation three-pointer was off the mark.

UIC has now won 12 games in a row. As for Banks, he's not interested in the one-horse label.

"I don't carry this team," he said Monday. "I've been telling the guys all along, 'This is a team. I'm a part of it; you're a part of it.'"

Banks didn't play a large part in the first half, failing to score until 2:27 was left while his teammates were building a 33-26 lead.

Each team was in early foul trouble and showed some early nerves.

At halftime, Armond Williams and Aaron Carr each had seven points and Justin Bowen had six. UWM's Ed McCants and Dylan Page, both voted to the All-Horizon League first team by coaches, combined for 18 points.

McCants spearheaded a quick second-half attack of an error-filled, helter-skelter game to erase the Flames' halftime edge and set up the game's final moments.

Illinois-Chicago improved to 24-7; Wisconsin-Milwaukee fell to 19-10.

UIC brought 11 busloads of fans up Interstate 94, but the red-jerseyed students couldn't drown out the yellow-clad yells of UWM's fans.

Collins wants to put to rest the notion that Wisconsin-Milwaukee is UIC's only league rival.

"Every game against a Horizon League school is a rivalry," he said. "Loyola is right up the road. That's a rivalry. Detroit has always been a rivalry. Butler had won the Horizon the last four years. That's a rivalry, too. Let's keep it that way."

Collins and Wisconsin-Milwaukee coach Bruce Pearl have their own rivalry.

"I respect what [Collins] has done with his team and how his players play, but we have no relationship other than we coach against each other," Pearl said.

Illini coach Bruce Weber and his siblings learned from their dad to strive for success, a lesson they are executing with uncommon flair this season

Sons satisfy father's hunger

By Barry Temkin
and Marlen Garcia

Tribune staff reporters

"Hungry Louie" would be a proud man today, even if he wouldn't be completely satisfied.

Louis Weber always insisted his five children would become teachers and the three boys would coach, and coach well. Weber, a perfectionist's perfectionist when it came to his kids, always demanded they excel in whatever they did.

So if he had not died about 17 years ago, Weber no doubt would be feeling pretty good about the rolls his middle son, Bruce, and his youngest son, Dave, are on as head basketball coaches.

Bruce Weber had led Illinois to its first undisputed



Dave Weber

Big Ten championship since 1952 and the No. 12 spot in the AP poll in his first year in Campaign.

Last season Dave Weber's Glenbrook North High School team finished third in the Class AA state tournament. Glenbrook North (25-3) plays Schaumburg on Wednesday in a sectional semifinal game at Buffalo Grove.

"He'd be very proud of us," Dave acknowledged about his father the day of Illinois' game against Purdue last week. "But he'd be telling us what to do right now.

"He'd be at the Purdue game, giving Bruce some suggestions."

Father's roots

Louis Weber was not shy about offering an opinion or shooting a basketball. It was the latter trait, which he displayed as a star at Milwaukee's North Division High School about six decades ago, that spawned his nickname.

Weber, his wife Dawn said, had the basketball ability but not the grades to secure a college scholarship offer. He arrived in the U.S. from Austria as a child, and his parents had not emphasized academics and spoke German at home, Dawn said.

So Weber got a job at a Milwaukee manufacturing company, eventually working in sales. He and Dawn raised their kids—Jan, Ron, Bruce, Carrie and Dave—in a small three-bedroom home in a working-class neighborhood on the city's north side.

His lost opportunity ate at Hungry Louie, and stoked his almost fanatical resolve that his children would attend college, get their degrees and teach other people's kids. Teachers, he told his children, helped others and got summers off too.

"He basically told us, 'You're going to be a teacher and a coach,'" Bruce said, "and you didn't mess with my dad. We all went into education."

All five kids also had to play musical instruments. The girls played clarinet, the boys trumpet. Bruce made the all-city band team as a high school freshman, to his chagrin.

"It was going to take time away from sports," he said.

The kids could quit music, though, once they played a varsity sport.

"Dave made the varsity baseball team as a freshman," Bruce said. "He got to quit before the rest of us."

Discipline was paramount to Louis Weber. His kids, he'd say, would not miss school.

When one did stay home because of illness, no one told Hungry Louie. His wife made sure the transgressor was dressed by the time Weber got home from work.

"We always had that fear factor of him," Bruce said. "We respected him and feared him a little bit."

Weber took an active role in his sons' athletic lives, coaching them in basketball before they entered high school, though not more than one of them at a time

because of the difference in their ages. Ron was born in 1951, Bruce in '56 and Dave in '66.

Bruce and Dave played for him on a team called the Whiz Kids, which competed in Milwaukee recreation leagues.

Hungry Louie coached like he lived, intensely and aggressively. He sometimes coached while standing on his team's bench.

"He was a very dominating person, boisterous and demanding," Dave said. "He was probably tougher than any coach I played for."

"Dad always said 'Hustle,' and you always gave 100 percent. He knew how to teach you to play hard."

Always active

Playing, and playing hard, seemed to come naturally for the three brothers. Their childhood years were an endless procession of pickup basketball, baseball and football games everywhere from the alley behind their house to parks and recreation centers.

If they weren't playing, they might be watching a Braves baseball game or a Marquette practice or game.

"That's the memory of my life," Dave said. "I remember in the winter on weekends, we drove wherever there was an open gym—Ron, Bruce, me and two friends."

"We played against anyone we could find. We weren't great, but we would challenge anyone."

Often they would challenge each other. The entire Weber family was and is tightly knit, but the boys were competitive.

"They got along well," their mother said, "except they sometimes would fight and break a bed."

The competition included makeshift Wiffle ball and basketball contests in their basement. Their father often would join them for games of two-on-two alley hoops.

"We had some very physical games," Bruce said. "There were no fouls called, especially when my dad committed one."

Bruce was the most competitive of the boys and the most im-

petuous. Dawn Weber estimates he took 11 trips to the emergency room; Bruce says it was 14.

One time Bruce received numerous stitches after hitting his head on a beam during a game of basement H-O-R-S-E. Another time he injured a knee when a car struck him while he was riding his bicycle to the playground. Bruce said he didn't tell his parents for fear he might miss a basketball game, but the car's driver informed his parents of the accident, and Bruce was off to the emergency room again.

"He never backed down," Dave said. "I thought he'd get killed sometimes. He's still that way—very intense and competitive."

Just like his dad

Bruce was the closest to his father in temperament and the most likely to stand up to him on matters of sports. He was known as "Little Louie," though he is a calmer version of his dad.

"Ron and I are much more laid back and conservative," Dave said. "Bruce is much more boisterous and aggressive, and he coaches that way."

"He battled my father all the time. Ron and I listened and kind of backed away then. Bruce got into arguments with him."

As the oldest son, Ron was the boys' leader and their coach on playgrounds as part of a summer job. Dave, who benefited from playing against older kids, was the most talented athlete of the three and the only one to receive an athletic scholarship.

"Ron got us organized, Bruce did the dirty work on the court and I shot," Dave said.

All three brothers played baseball and basketball at Marshall High School. Hungry Louie was no longer their coach, but he kept on pushing.

"Those kids did not want to go home after a game because Louie would be talking about a free throw miss in a 20-point victory," said longtime Sheboygan

Continued

(Wis.) North coach Tom Desotell, a friend of the Weber family for 40 years.

Dave was the Milwaukee City Conference most valuable basketball player as a senior in 1978. He enrolled at Bowling Green but quickly transferred to Wisconsin-Milwaukee and then switched to Weber State after UWM dropped from Division I to Division III.

Ron and Bruce both attended UWM. Bruce didn't play basketball there, and Ron played there briefly. Each became a volunteer coach at a local high school before graduation.

Jan became a teacher and administrator in the Chicago area. Carrie died in an automobile accident 25 years ago.

Ron spent 27 years as a high school coach, the last 23 as a successful head coach at Waupaca (Wis.) High. He retired from coaching three years ago but still teaches physical education there.

Bruce coached briefly at a Milwaukee high school before starting his career in college coaching in 1979 at Western Kentucky.

After graduating from Weber State in 1983, Dave started an 11-year career as a college assistant coach that culminated with seven seasons at Eastern Illinois.

By 1994, though, he was married with a small child, and he gave up his dream of becoming a college head coach for the more stable life of a high school coach and physical education teacher. He became an assistant at Glenbrook North for a year before taking over as head coach.

"In college when you get to March, all you do is look in the paper to see who was fired," he said. "I did that 11 years and thought, 'Do I want to do that my whole life?'"

"I decided it was best for my family to stay in the Midwest and get a coaching job in the Chicago area."

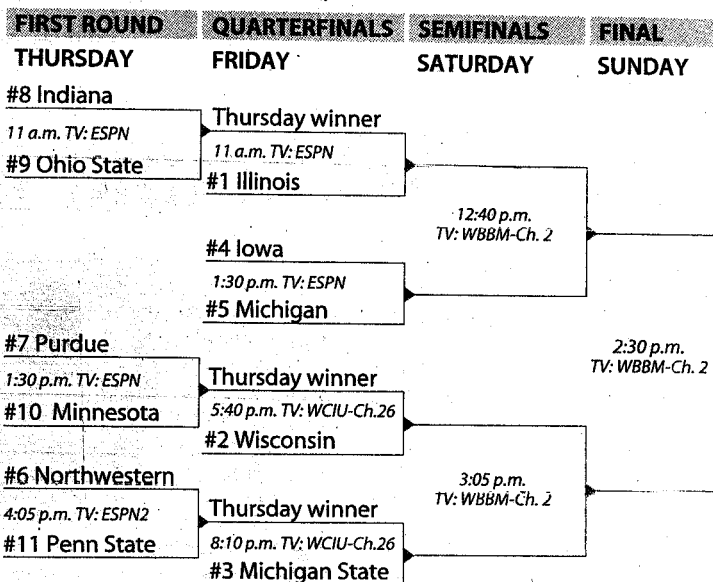
A different path

Bruce, however, stayed the course, working as an assistant coach at Purdue from 1980-98 before spending five years as head coach at Southern Illinois.

"I think stability appeals more to Dave and me, where Bruce puts it out there and whatever happens, happens," Ron said. "He's more like my dad.

Big Ten men's tournament

At Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis



"I think Bruce is not afraid to fail. I don't think he thought he could fail."

Bruce rarely takes a day off. Like his father, he has a relentless work ethic, a trait he acquired as a youngster.

"I was driven, just like my dad," he said. "Always going."

Bruce said he was tempted to offer Dave an assistant's job at SIU and Illinois but doubts his brother, who now has four children 2 through 11, would be interested and fears coaching together would invite too much scrutiny.

Bruce holds out some hope they can coach together once he becomes more established as a college coach, but Dave doubts he'll return to college coaching, even though he calls himself a college basketball "junkie."

"It would be too demanding on my family and my relationship with Bruce," he said.

Complete Weber family gatherings are only occasional because the demands of Division I coaching keep Bruce, who has three children of his own, busy. Bruce and Dave, however, talk frequently by phone, especially about basketball.

"He has helped me tremendously," Dave said. "Our whole offense is based on his philosophy. We have plays called Illinois, Champaign and Saluki."

Glenbrook North's top player is Jon Scheyer, who is regarded as the state's No. 1 sophomore prospect and is a prime recruit-

ing target for numerous college coaches, including Bruce Weber.

Dave acknowledges that places him in a "difficult" position. He worries that some college coaches may believe he is favoring Illinois and that Illini fans will expect him to push Scheyer there.

"I've almost gone overboard to accommodate other schools so they don't feel I'm not communicating with them because my brother is the coach at Illinois," said Dave, who finds the trickiest part of the situation is deciding what, if anything, to tell coaches who don't know who his brother is. "I don't know how much [Jon] will be influenced by Bruce's being my brother."

Dave said he has discussed the situation with the Scheyer family.

"We've just said Jon and his family have to make a decision, and whatever is best for him is what he'll do," he said.

Bruce and Dave's biggest fan, of course, is 80-year-old Dawn Weber. She has been to both sons' games this season and keeps files with articles about their careers.

"We try to get her the positive articles," Ron said.

Dawn was always the more easygoing of the parents, but she still gets worked up and worried about her boys' coaching careers.

When she watches Illini

games on TV, she cheers for Bruce's players to stop their opponents even during replays, and at times she has yelled loudly enough to set off the security alarm. Her basement is filled with trophies, posters and pictures from all three sons' playing and coaching careers.

Dawn, though, is no Hungry Louie. She was one of a large contingent of family and friends who watched Illinois lose to Wisconsin by 20 points Jan. 24 in Madison.

"After the game my mom said, 'Oh, you played well,'" Bruce said. "I said, 'No, Mom, we didn't.'"

"She's always very positive."

Louis Weber died of a heart attack before Bruce or Dave became a head coach. A picture of Hungry Louie giving Ron advice after a Waupaca game is a hint of what the two are missing.

"Louie would be just reveling in this," Desotell said. "Oh, he'd be smiling, but he'd be dying with every loss."

12th straight win puts UIC in NCAA field

By Bill Jauss

Tribune staff reporter

MILWAUKEE—Sophomore Elliott Poole made the tie-breaking basket and a huge steal in the final seconds Tuesday night to earn Illinois-Chicago a 65-62 victory over Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the Horizon League tournament title and the league's automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

The triumph was the 12th in a row for UIC (24-7), which will be going to its third NCAA tourney since 1998. UWM (19-10) lost its first home game of the season after 13 straight victories.

The Flames had to overcome a brilliant game by the Panthers' Ed McCants, who scored 19 points and played outstanding defense against Cedrick Banks. He limited Banks to two points in the first half and 14 for the game.

With 35 seconds to play, Poole muscled home a basket on the blocks to put UIC ahead 64-62. Freshman Marcetteaus McGee, playing because Martell Bailey went out with leg cramps, made it 65-62 with a free throw with 5.7 seconds to go.

McCants' bid for a game-tying three for overtime banged off the rim, and UIC students ran onto the floor in celebration.

The U.S. Cellular Arena re-

cord crowd of 11,250 roared its emotion through the final minutes when the two archrivals battled furiously and evenly.

With UIC up 60-59, Bailey was carried off the floor with cramps. Poole bumped the lead to 62-59 with a muscle move. McCants tied it 62-62 at 1:51 with his fifth three-pointer of the night.

About 600 UIC students came via 11 buses from Chicago so they could support coach Jimmy Collins and his players.

The Flames took a 33-26 lead after a bizarre first half when UIC's Westinghouse connection, Banks and Bailey, were virtually invisible.

Banks, closely guarded by McCants, scored his two points on 1-for-7 shooting in the first half. Star playmaker Bailey went scoreless and had only two assists.

Armond Williams and Aaron Carr stepped up and scored seven points apiece for UIC, but free throws saved the Flames in the first half.

UIC, often a weak foul-shooting team, made 11 of 15 (.733) in the first half. Milwaukee was 0 of 3. Panthers coach Bruce Pearl left the floor at halftime, reminding the refs of the disparity in fouls.

The Panthers opened the game as though they had been cranked too tightly emotionally. They missed their first seven shots and fell behind 8-2 after six minutes. Justin Bowen hit UIC's first two buckets.

UWM finally found the range and took their first lead, 9-8 on McCants' driving fast-break layup with 11:12 left in the half. But despite McCants' game-leading 10 first-half points, the Flames retained and stretched their lead.

The Panthers needed only four minutes of attacking basketball in the second half to eat up UIC's lead. McCants' second three-point basket rocketed UWM into the lead 38-37.

Banks hit his first three-point

basket of the night, but he still wasn't getting his usual looks, and McCants & Associates refused to lighten the pressure.

The rivalry between the schools is fueled by a personal feud between Pearl and Collins, who was an assistant at Illinois in 1989 when Pearl, then an assistant at Iowa, recorded a conversation in which a recruit implied Collins promised him extra benefits to attend Illinois.

Collins was exonerated but his relationship with Pearl has been frosty.

The two skipped the customary pregame handshake.

ILLINOIS-CHICAGO (24-7): Bowen 3-6 2-2 8, A. Williams 4-9 2-4 10, Scott 0-0 2-2, Bailey 0-2 0-2 0, Banks 5-16 2-2 14, Stefanov 1-1 0-0 2, McGee 1-1 3-5 5, Carr 3-6 2-3 11, Poole 5-8 0-0 10, Petrusic 0-4 3-4 3. **Totals** 22-53 16-24 65.

WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE (19-10): Tucker 4-10 3-6 11, Page 6-15 3-6 20, Tigert 1-3 2-4 4, Hill 2 5 0-1 4, McCants 7-17 0-0 19, Pancratz 0-1 0-1 0, Kadima 2-5 0-0 4, Wright 0-0 0-0 0, Mielke 0-2 0-2 0. **Totals** 22-58 8-20 62.

Halftime: UIC 33-26. **Three-point goals:** UIC 5-12 (Carr 3-5, Banks 2-7), Wis.-Milwaukee 10-21 (Page 5-6, McCants 5-11, Hill 0-1, Tigert 0-1, Kadima 0-2). **Fouled out:** Tucker. **Rebounds:** UIC 38 (A. Williams 10), Wis.-Milwaukee 39 (Page, Tigert 9). **Assists:** UIC 10 (Bailey 3), Wis.-Milwaukee 17 (Hill 4). **Total fouls:** UIC 22, Wis.-Milwaukee 20. **A:** 10,254.

MORE INSIDE

■ Marquette
tries to
extend
season.

PAGE 3

■ Valparaiso
wins Mid-Con
title. PAGE 3

Chief issue takes journey out west

University of Oregon debates playing Illini because of feelings about mascot

BY MARY JOHNSON
Staff writer

Local Chief Illiniwek supporters and opponents have voiced their opinions on campus, but the University mascot controversy has traveled far beyond Champaign-Urbana.

The most recent objection came from the editorial board of the Oregon Daily Emerald, the University of Oregon student newspaper.

In an editorial, the board asked the university's administration to refrain from scheduling sporting events with "any teams who offensively use a name or mascot of any ethnic group." The editorial was written after an announcement that the University of Oregon Ducks will play the Fighting Illini in basketball in the next two seasons.

Over 200 law students, 25 professors and the dean of the college of law at the University of Oregon signed a resolution in 2002 requesting administration to refrain from scheduling athletic events with schools having

American Indian mascots without tribal approval. The issue did not resurface until recently.

"We are not trying to make the University of Illinois change their mascot, but if Oregon wanted to be proactive, they should not schedule a game with U of I," said Brad Schmidt, editor-in-chief of the Oregon Daily Emerald.

Kent Brown, University sports information director, said he was not aware of other universities' positions regarding the Chief. According to Brown, it is possible for schools to break the agreement to play the University, but it is not likely to happen.

The Emerald editorial board is not the only group off-campus to voice an objection to playing schools with American Indian mascots.

In 1993, the University of Wisconsin adopted a formal policy against playing schools with American Indian mascots after a basketball game against the Alcorn State "Scalping Braves."

The University of Wisconsin Athletic Department Policy on

Native American Logos and Names still allows the Badgers to play schools with American Indian mascots if that school is in the university's conference, a long-time rival or if it is game in a tournament or bowl match-up.

Steve Malchow, associate athletic director at the University of Wisconsin, said the university has not had a problem with the Fighting Illini playing the Badgers.

"Illinois has not brought Chief Illiniwek (to Madison)," said Malchow. "Every year our athletic director sends a letter to the Illinois athletic director to remind him of our policy."

Athletics have spurred many of the debates concerning Chief Illiniwek.

Carol Spindel, long-time advocate of retiring the Chief and author of *Dancing at Halftime: Sports and the Controversy over American Indian Mascots*, sees sports at the root of the support for Chief Illiniwek.

"Most of the Native-American

groups have expressed a strong desire to see this mascot removed," she said. "The main support for keeping the Chief comes from the sports programs ... 2004 is awfully too late to see this mascot removed."

Dan Bolin, president of Students for Chief Illiniwek, said the Chief fits into the same category as other American Indian mascots. Chief supporters see the Chief more as an "honorable tribute to our Illini heritage" than an offensive symbol. He said Chief Illiniwek is very different from other colleges' offensive mascots that have led to the athletic policies.

"Chief Illiniwek is an exception to those kinds of (athletic) policies due to (its) respectful nature," Bolin said. "Chief Illiniwek does not sign autographs or make appearances at the mall ... He does not travel to away games, and you only see him at halftime at home games and special events like the Sugar Bowl."

— Dan Farnham contributed to this report.

Chief symbol offends

James Mortland is right; a symbol is nothing more than the ideas people attach to it. Chief Illiniwek means different things to different people. However, it is one thing to be loyal to your home team's mascot and another to completely ignore the feelings of those who oppose it. Anyone who claims that they "honor" Chief Illiniwek are paying cheap lip service to a race that was systematically eradicated by our ancestors and their (our) government. This is the same mentality that would push the existence of slavery in America out of mind and deny the repercussions of racism deeply embedded in our society. I refer to the undeniable link between race and poverty, but the difference is that Native Americans are largely not around to be oppressed anymore. Of course it is your constitutional right to wear that Illiniwek ball cap, but keep in mind that your mascot is a martyr in the eyes of the compassionate.

BENJAMIN SELANDER

Urbana resident